

The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● FEBRUARY 1975

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BUSINESS MANAGER'S NOTICE

Rates of subscription per annum : In India Rs. 6. In England 60 pence. In U.S.A. \$2. Foreign subscription paid in India Rs. 9. Single copy 65 P. (Bank Commission of 65 P. to be added on all mofussil cheques.)

Honorary (and ex-officio) Business Manager : Mrs. D. L. Gopal Ratnam, M.A. All remittances and communications about new subscriptions, discontinuance of subscriptions, advertisements and changes of address should be sent to the Business Manager, *South India Churchman*, Synod Office, Cathedral P.O., Madras 600 086. Telephone: 811266.

Honorary Agent in the United Kingdom : Mrs. Elton, The Rectory, Itteringham, Norfolk, Nor. 17y.

IMPORTANT

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MRS. D. L. GOPAL RATNAM,
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NOTICES

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LENT 1975

Lent is synonymous with fasting. Many will consider and decide as to what to give up during this period of forty days. The emphasis mostly will be on doing away with something. In addition to these, many members will attend the special Lenten Services, most of which will be the so-called 'spiritual exercises'. There will be meditations and prayers on the passion of our Lord. It will be a time of reflection and introspection which many times may lead to an introverted personal life. Lent 1975 brings before us with poignancy the daily need for fasting of thousands of our fellow citizens in many parts of our country. Fasting which is the Lenten style for Christians, is for many people today their daily life style. Under the auspices of the Synod, a three-man committee consisting of Mr. Paul Pandian of CASA, Mr. Ponraj of the NCC of India and the Rev. Joseph John of the Madras diocese, visited a number of places in the Madurai-Ramnad districts. They met with heartrending incidents in a number of villages which they visited. Drought is serious. Hunger is acute. Helplessness is rampant. Hollow cheeks and sunken eyes are a common spectacle. An agonised cry has come out loud and clear not for more spiritual exercises, but for immediate action.

Invitation has gone out to the Bishops of the CSI, the Presidents of the Lutheran Churches, the Regional Secretaries of the NCC, to the Mar Thoma and other churches for a meeting to be held on the 6th and 7th February in Madras to think, plan and take action to meet the serious drought situation.

The Christians along with the interested people can do a number of things both on the local as well as at the state levels. However, our hope is that the energies of the members of various Churches will not be dissipated by duplicating a number of relief work programmes with one another. The sincerity and concern are to be channelized and brought out together. Our united efforts should lead to a joint programme involving all the Churches and if and where possible with the help of other voluntary agencies and the government. In such a co-operative service there need be no jealousy or fear of, either a particular community and its motives or of any denomination being left out. Secondly, hunger is universal. It affects all people. It knows no religious or communal differences. It can hardly be affirmed that the churches have no business to mount a relief operation if it is to meet the hunger of the Christians only. Any service is for the sake of the people who are affected. Thirdly, it is but natural for formulating programmes which would meet the immediate needs of food for the day. However important that



may be, in the long run it will be futile if we just dole out handfuls of rice. It will be like giving a few coins to the beggar and walking away and forgetting him. Participating in the programme of feeding which is a necessity should be a part of the programme of Development. That would need much more imagination, hard work and creativity. It would need patience and continuity. Emphasis is to be given towards that. Fourthly, in our appeal to the members of the congregation and to the community at large, one should not talk about giving charity. Certainly everyone wants to be charitable. The dimension of justice is to be brought out in our approach. It is the prophetic call to share the resources of God with others. The responsibility for stewardship of God's bounty to mankind are to be communicated. Our action should not stop short of anything less than that. It is justice and not charity which demands our giving. Fifthly, the Programmes could be such in which everyone would have a part to play. There may be opportunities like work camps and physical distribution in which the youth and the students can be involved. In the programmes of fund raising, education and distribution people of all ages can be involved. It should not be isolated and left to only one segment of the congregation. Lastly, the churches should not assume that they can solve all the problems of all the people. They should be modest, limited according to their best but always effective and efficient. Whatever we do, is it possible to be concrete and at least create three or four models in the whole of South India. Such models can be visible symbols of the possibility and a hope for a better life to many.

Lent is a part of the preparation leading towards the promise of a new life. Such a new life is for those who have gone through the experience of the Cross. The Cross can at no time be beautiful. It means blood, sweat, agony and suffering. Lent means experiencing all these. That is the call which comes and challenges the members of the churches during this Lent. Our hope and prayer is that Christians responding will join together, go out and give their lives for the sake of others beginning from Lent 1975.

Asian Christian Peace Conference

Kottayam, India

COMMUNIQUE

The concern for peace and justice should become the focal point for the mission of the Church in Asia, declared the Rev. Dr. Russell Chandran who chaired the historic first meeting of the Asian Christian Peace Conference, which met in Kottayam, South India, at the Orthodox Theological Seminary from the 8th to the 13th of January, 1975. Ninety-eight delegates from twenty nations and different churches in Asia and fraternal delegates from Europe, U.S.A. and Latin America met together to discuss the theme 'Struggling Together for Peace with Justice—the Role and Responsibility of Asian Christian'. There were also representatives from the Buddhist, Hindu and Shinoist Faiths at the Conference.

Messages of greetings were received from the President of the Christian Peace Conference, Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad and Novgorod the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, the Rev. Dr. Philip Potter, the President of the Asian Buddhist Peace Association and from several other churches and organisations. Bishop Bartha, the Vice-Chairman, brought greetings of the Christian Peace Conference. Dr. Karoly Toth the General Secretary of the Christian Peace Conference was a special guest at the Conference.

Besides hearing the main address, statements from delegations, and addresses in the Commissions, the delegates worked through the four commissions of the Conference. Noting that the 'Concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and impoverishment of the millions continue unabated' the Economic Commission saw 'the domination exercised by Monopolies, over the economic system' of many countries in Asia as the main danger. It asked for a 'regional co-operation among the Asian nations' to face this new onslaught against peace and justice in Asia. The Commission asked the churches 'to take sides with the oppressed and the exploited' and to 'conscientize the Christian Community and propagate the theologies of an egalitarian society'.

The Political Commission condemned the political and economic oppression which all the Asian countries experienced in varying ways. Through these 'the Dignity of human labour is sacrificed for the selfish greed of an exploitative elite'. Rejecting categorically 'the false belief that human rights can be guaranteed by material prosperity' the Commission affirmed 'that there can be no true human development for the majority of the people if the right of exploitation is guaranteed'.

The Theological Commission asserted 'that the Christian message had to be rooted and grounded in the concrete human situations existing in Asia' and that 'it is the Living Lord speaking to the Church through the guidance of the Holy Spirit that can be our only source and guide for action'. As 'in working for peace we are involved in God's world, politics and the social life of the people should not be seen as sordid'. The commission insisted that 'the call of the Gospel is a radical call, and not to respond to that call creatively is a betrayal'.

The Cultural Commission expressed its serious concern over the present scientific and technological age which has developed a peculiar culture of the affluent

society. The values of such a culture of the affluent society were the maximizations of profits and consumerism leading towards an 'acquisitive greediness', that has led to an economic exploitation by an 'elite' group through multinational corporations and a continuing cultural imperialism in Asia which has seriously undermined the creativity of Asian cultures. As the educational system was tied up with the values of 'elite', the commission called for the development of 'an educational system that shall seek the quality of life based on our own authentic national identity'.

The Chief Minister of Kerala, Mr. Achutha Menon who was prevented from coming to the Conference due to ill health, sent his speech in which he emphasized that 'the struggle for peace and the struggle for a social revolution within each country for a just order are complementary'.

Fr. Tissa Balasuriya gave an absorbing address on 'China after the cultural revolution'.

The Conference decided to appoint a Committee to inquire into the question of political prisoners in Asian Countries. It further decided to have a Continuation Committee with responsibility to follow up the decisions of the Conference. Dr. Russell Chandran was elected as Chairman, the Rev. T. Hirayama as Vice-Chairman and the Rev. Christie Rosa as the Secretary. Mr. A. K. Thamphy, the Vice-Chairman of the Christian Peace Conference will be a member along with one member from each country represented at the Conference.

The Conference passed resolutions supporting the struggle of the peoples of the countries of Indo-China for national independence, freedom, peace and justice. It called on the South Korean authorities to stop the cruel suppression of the patriotic and freedom loving people and to release the imprisoned Christians and other religionists immediately.

Noting with deep concern the presence of foreign military bases in various Asian Countries and carrying of nuclear weapons in the Indian and Pacific Oceans the Conference demanded the unconditional withdrawal of all foreign military installation in Asian territory for the declaration of the Indian and Pacific oceans as zones of Peace. It deplored plans for the development of Diego Garcia as a military base by the US and British governments.

The delegates were honoured at the ceremonial opening of the Conference by the presence of Mr. E. P. Mani, the Honourable Minister for Food of the Kerala Government, the Mayor of Kottayam and the dignitaries of the Churches.

The delegates were graciously received at the Tea reception given by the Honourable Mayor and members of the Kottayam Municipal Council on Friday, the 13th of January. It was a privilege for the members of the Conference to visit different churches on Sunday, the 14th and participate in the worship along with the congregation. On that afternoon there was a public reception preceded by the most colourful procession at which the delegates marched behind their national flags and in the

ational costumes. The trumpets, the drummers, the colourful uniform of children and the decorated elephants gave a festival appearance to the peace march. After the prayers, songs and speeches, the delegates and the large crowd were entertained with a two-hour cultural entertainment which included the various dances of India.

On Monday the 13th, the delegates had an opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the rich scenic beauty of Kerala when they went on a boat excursion in the backwaters.

The success of the Conference was largely due to the

abundant hospitality, unstinted help of the students and staff of the Orthodox Theological Seminary, and the meticulous care taken by the local Committee of which Mr. Mammen Varghese of the *Malayala Manorama*, a leading newspaper in India, was the Secretary, and Fr. Paul Varghese, the Principal of the Seminary, was the Chairman.

The Conference is extremely indebted and deeply grateful to all these friends and to the State of Kerala.

Adapted at the Conference

The World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer this year will be observed on the 7th day of March 1975. The theme, 'BECOME PERFECTLY ONE' has been prepared by the Women of Egypt. What is more appropriate for us today than this theme, 'Become perfectly one' when we are drifting and falling to pieces all over the world?

The call for unity comes from the precious lips of Jesus Christ Himself when according to St. John, Jesus gathered together His 12 apostles for the Last Supper and prayed aloud to the Father thus: 'I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they all be one; even as thou Father, art in Me, and I in Thee.....that they may become perfectly one'.

The World Day of Prayer is meant precisely for the fulfilment of our Lord's appeal to the Father 2 Millennia ago wherein he appealed for the unity of all who believed in Him so that they would be partakers of His glory and the heavenly bliss. Let us then cast aside our pettiness and shedding all denominational differences get together under the canopy of the World Day of Prayer, proclaiming our oneness in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Translators and reporters are requested to make a special note of the change-over of the Bursary from N.C.C.I. to A.I.C.C.W.I. (All India Council of Christian Women). Our present Treasurer is:

Mrs. L. Vijayam,
20/165, Hamnesanagar,
Guntakal, Anantapur District,
ANDHRA PRADESH.

2. All collections made during the World Day of Prayer may kindly be sent to Mrs. L. Vijayam, to the above address.

REPORTS

The W.D.P. Sub-Committee is happy to report that the projects for 1974 from the collections of the year were successfully implemented:

- (i) A retreat for Nurses at Nasrapur was held for 2 days with the help of Rs. 200 donated.
- (ii) Madurai reported that the donation of Rs. 200 was matched by local collections and the following programmes were operated:

- 12 Bible Study Classes
- 2 One-day seminars on Family Planning and responsible parenthood.
- 1 One-day dialogue retreat.

All these were conducted at an Ecumenical level for both leaders and participants and proved very beneficial for Christian Unity. This augurs well for the 1975 World Day of Prayer Theme:

'THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE'

APPEAL

The Chairman and members of the Sub-Committee of World Day of Prayer appeal to all Christian women in India to participate wholeheartedly in the Service which will be held on the 7th March 1975 in the Churches and Institutions. Men and children are welcome to join in and strengthen our effort for perfect unity.

MARY THANGARAJ,
For the Sub-Committee,
World Day of Prayer

An Open Letter

To : Women everywhere who will be using the World Day of Prayer Service in March, 1975.

From : The Women's Ecumenical Prayer Fellowship in Egypt, who prepared it for you: Greeting and Peace!

So that you may enter into the fellowship of prayer in unity of spirit with us, we offer

Some Background Notes about the Church in Egypt

We in the Arab Republic of Egypt invite you all, our sisters in Jesus Christ, from countries East, West, North and South, to join us in this Service of Worship, centred on the theme, 'Become Perfectly One'.

This was the prayer of Jesus as He agonized over His approaching ordeal on the Cross. He was thinking down across the centuries to all of us in our various places and situations. So we join in one-ness of spirit and love to worship him this day. As it was His prayer, so it is our prayer too. We think in shame of our dividedness which makes ineffectual the witness of Christians and builds up walls of misunderstanding between the Church and the world. Let us become perfectly one as we pray together today, that the world may believe.

The Church in Egypt has always counted itself especially blessed because of the sojourn for a time within its borders of the little Jesus with Mary and Joseph, as God had directed them.

St. Mark is accepted and honoured as the founder of the Christian Church in Egypt. He served as its first bishop and suffered martyrdom in Alexandria in 68 AD. The word 'Copt' means Egyptian; the Copts are the native Christians of Egypt and direct descendants of the ancient Egyptians. The ancient Christian Church was called the Coptic, or Egyptian Church. Its life and faith have continued unbroken through the centuries, a witness to the love and power of the risen Christ. It suffered greatly during the Roman persecutions and is known as the Church of the Martyrs. Following the Council of Chalcedon in 451, a part of the Church, unable to accept the tenets of the Council, seceded to become a truly national Church, known as the Coptic Orthodox Church. Under the leadership of H. H. Anba Shenouda III, Patriarch, it makes its contribution to the nation and the Christian community.

Other Orthodox Churches are the Greek Orthodox with its own Patriarch, the Armenian and Syrian Orthodox Churches, and one Russian Congregation, all of which serve their own communities who settled in Egypt at different periods of history.

The Roman Catholic Church sent emissaries to visit Egypt at various times through the centuries, one of whom was St. Francis of Assisi in 1219. From these many visits, a Catholic community grew up. The Coptic Catholic Patriarchate was established in 1895; its head today is H. B. Patriarch Stephanos I. Other Catholic rites include the Greek Catholic (known as the Byzantine-Arab), the Armenian, the Syrian, the Maronite and the Chaldean Churches. There are a number of Catholic societies servicing the nation in the field of education, medical and nursing care, and social services, by both women's and men's orders. 'Caritas' renders great services in welfare and relief as the social expression of the Catholic Church.

The Arab Protestant community consists of several denominations: Coptic Evangelical Church, rooted in the Reformed-Presbyterian tradition, the Episcopal Church (Anglican and Egyptian), Church of God, Holy Church, Free Methodist Church, several Pentecostal churches. There are also several foreign language churches serving the foreign communities resident in Egypt.

With this great diversity of rites and languages represented by the larger number of churches described above, it is understandable that we feel impelled to seek for a unity of spirit and expression that will honour our Lord, the Founder of the Church. Three Churches, the Coptic Orthodox, the Greek Orthodox, and the Coptic Evangelical, are members of the World Council of Churches. The Near East Council of Churches, formerly an organ for co-operation between the various Protestant Churches of the region, is now restructuring and will include in its membership the ancient Orthodox Churches. These are now working together in theological education, refugee relief, and in Information services. The ecumenical witness is also carried out through the Ecumenical Advisory Council for Church Services, which promotes interchurch programmes for youth activities, relief services for displaced people, the World Week of Prayer Services. The Women's Ecumenical Prayer Fellowship shares in helping to bring women of the many churches together for prayer and Bible study.

Egypt is a Muslim Country. The Christian community is a minority group of approximately 10% of the population. Christians are citizens of the nation, with all the rights and responsibilities pertaining thereto.

Egypt is an old country with a rich historic cultural heritage. But it is a young and developing country too, with its Revolution just 23 years old. The new movement is leading the nation from the old feudal patterns of society into an urban industrialized technological social system. The Church is a part of the day and shares in the building of the modern state, participating in the political, social, economic and cultural programmes of the new movement. The Church supports the nation with Egypt's hopes for a better future for all people, by her prayers for the realization of peace and progress, and by active participation in the institutions which may bring these to fruition.

Egypt is also a part of the larger Arab nation; which is bound together by language and culture. Egypt is involved in the conflict of the Middle East, an area which resents any form of foreign domination, an area which has had a long history of colonialization by foreign powers. Egypt seeks redress for what it considers injustices: eviction of Arab peoples from their homes and livelihood, illegal occupation of its land. It is in a state of war, at the present writing.

The needs of displaced persons, refugees, the poor and the afflicted, the hopeless and despairing among Christians and Muslims alike, are constantly before us. The Church of Egypt shares in these concerns and operates in all efforts to alleviate the sufferings and frustrations of the refugees and the displaced, both Palestinian and Egyptian. Our Christian conscience cries out for peace with justice for these people, and for understanding and consideration for the country.

Women and the Church

How appropriate that was, to honour Mary, glorify womanhood and to enthuse the C.S.I. Women's Fellowship in the year's Yuletide issue of the S.I.C.! Being a padre's wife, I regarded that almost all the articles were thought-provoking and challenging. There are some points I would like to place before the women leaders and readers, who perhaps can offer suggestions in drawing up suitable programmes for the W.F. in this International Women's Year.

For 17 years I have led W.F. meetings. Be it a hill station, urban area or a town, young women seldom attend the W.F. meetings. Women of 20-30 age group, are usually young mothers and the babies need their attention. Once I asked a young housewife why she never attended the meetings, since she had no children to care for. The amusing answer I got was, that since she got married only that year and had no children she would not come to the meeting. She evidently thought that she lacked one qualification to be a W.F. member! This is the result of referring to the W.F. as 'Mothers' Union', which is common in this diocese.

Secondly, I have so far not come across a single graduate in the W.F. When we were in Tuticorin, I was once asked by the Y.W.C.A. to address their meeting. Educated, highly cultured women of status were there. It was a lively meeting and during the conversation hour I came to know that they all were members of St. Patrick's Church. A few months later, however, when I went to St. Patrick's Church to speak at their W.F. anniversary I could not find a single Y.W.C.A. member there! Do we not need young women who would bring vitality, drive, force and life into the W.F.? The Y.W.C.A. meet once a month and they had varied and interesting programmes, such as, sewing, cooking, experiments, fabric painting, sharing useful household hints etc., apart from brief devotions.

It is a known fact that this district is the 'Dowry Delta'. So much has been spoken and written against this ignoble custom, but no step is taken to crush it. They hail and laud Bishop Azariah for his noble example, but nobody cares to follow him, or fear the law which seems futile. Women here are certainly awake to this problem, but this deep-rooted practice is not so easy to exterminate. Even the 'Stree Shakti' is haphazard, when confronted by certain 'Sivams'! Here the W.F. as a mass movement can take the initiative to eradicate this social evil. For transmitting this energy into the society we require young, educated and competent women in our personnel.

Student unrest is attributed to lack of love at home. That is not true in all cases. Over-indulgence, lack of disciplinary training at home are also some causes. The renegade Absalom of the Bible did not lack filial love, did he? Though a home is not run at a hostel level, it is imperative to instil good and healthy habits in children in their early days; then they will not hanker after the hippie mode of life as they grow up. Had Sister Carol timed her revisit to India to synchronize with the Jubilee celebrations, I am sure she would have been gratified to hear or perhaps peruse the various diocesan reports. She would have felt grateful to God

that her labours were not in vain and that the vision she saw was actually taking a glorious shape.

It has been my fortune (or misfortune, for if I had stayed in the northern diocese throughout, perhaps I could enumerate the progress and achievements of the W.F. I saw as a student, worker and padre's wife, and rest on its laurels for awhile, just for the whim of it!) to shift to 3 dioceses within 25 years, so I cannot refute the saying that the W.F. is clinging too much to its past. Here we have an efficient W.F. General Secretary, who is fully, fervently and faithfully devoted to Christ and His cause. Besides handsome gifts to Church and building funds, new projects are launched and carried on admirably; sewing school for Hindu girls, maintenance of orphanage and adopting orphans, will contradict the statement that the W.F. is an abnormal cow! We have an adage in Tamil to the effect, that he who collects honey cannot help licking his hand! It is not often to raise fabulous sums of money for our own cause.

Yes, there are to be changes, and challenges to be accepted, attempted and achieved. Mrs. Gill feels that a Bishop's wife need not necessarily be the president of the Diocesan W.F. Not all will feel that way, especially these days, when position, power and prestige seem to mean so much not only in the country at large, but also in the church. Factions, disputes and unpleasant occurrences are common in all elections. It will be wise to avoid them. Anyway, offering secondary position to the Bishop's wife is unimaginable. Who would dare to preside over such a W.F. meeting? Christ is known as the Servant-King. Everybody cannot hold the exalted office of a premier, but anybody can be a Dorcas to serve and sacrifice, if need be, for the needy. If W.F. is to be a powerful machinery in the C.S.I. we need our Lord's humility to approach and uplift the downtrodden and also His mighty Spirit and dignity to overcome evil and to maintain the sanctity of womanhood.

(MRS.) HELEN JAMES PAUL

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

In the *South India Churchman*, December 1974, you say, 'Hardly any contribution is made by women in the discussion with regard to the ordination of women to the priesthood'. Our mothers and sisters and daughters know and obey St. Paul who says, 'I suffer not a woman to teach and let your woman keep silence in the Churches'.

Acharya G. SILVANUS

Prarthana-Ashram,
Puthenkada

P.O. Thirupuram,
(Via) Neyyattinkara,
S. Kerala.

Report on Christian Trainers' Meet—from 25th to 29th November, 1974

Christian Trainers in Human Relations met from 25th to 29th November, 1974, at the house of the Medical Mission Sisters, Bibwewadi, Poona-9. We came from different parts of India and belong to different Churches. The spacious house built on the top of a hillock, a little away from the city, the cheerful service of the Sisters and the bracingly cool November weather, helped us to foster a climate of Christian freedom and of ecumenical communion. We spontaneously shared our personal experiences, reflected together over our mission and work and searched together to clarify our part in helping the onward march of the Pilgrim Church in India and the emergence of a just society.

We decided to express our basic convictions in the following statement:

From the very beginning of our meeting, a certain restlessness was expressed in giving our services mostly to the elite who are on the higher rungs of the Society. This restlessness became more manifest with increased awareness of the need for rapid and radical change to remedy the injustice the masses of our people are suffering today. Our search for the validity of our work in this context made us assert the following convictions:

1. Through training in Human Relations, we are

contributing to real change of the human person and helping him to grow up to assume responsibility for his situation. This being the beginning of any change in keeping with human dignity.

2. We, as Christians, are aware of the acute need for radical change in the oppressive structures of society and we acknowledge the limitations of Human Relations Training programmes alone to effect this change immediately. We strongly feel that the benefits of Human Relations programmes should find wider application in the training of our people and that training in other branches of Behavioural and Social Sciences like,

Social Analysis, Community Organisation, Organisation Development and Awareness Development.

The blending of psychological and spiritual aspects in our lines during the five days reinforced the belief in the pattern that emerged out of our sharing could be adopted in our training programmes with greater profit.

PAUL SIROMAN

Christmas-Baqar-id Celebration

It is for the first time, perhaps for a long long period of time, that Christmas and Baqar-id—the id-ul-Kabirah—the big feast cherished by Muslims, coincided. The happy and significant coincidence was marked with a joint celebration on the 26th at the Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies at which about 30 Muslims and an equal number of Christians participated.

Welcoming the gathering Fr. Andreas D'Souza, Conventer, read out a message specially sent for the occasion from Sergio Cardinal Pignedoli, the President of the Secretariate for non-Christians. Stressing one common ground in the belief of one God and in Abraham as a prophet respected by both religions the message concluded: 'it is really fitting that we see in this coincidence an invitation to a deeper rapprochement, a more cordial understanding, and fuller collaboration, so that our all-powerful God may be better known and adored'.

The celebration was, in fact, a follow-up of a suggestion made by one of the participants at the closing day of a three-day Seminar on Preparing the Church for Dialogue with Muslims jointly sponsored by the Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies and C.B.C.I. Com-

mission for Dialogue. The concluding advice given by His Grace S. Arulappa, Archbishop of Hyderabad, that dialogue should be a work of the heart found its full expression in this festive gathering. It was indeed impressive and inspiring to see Muslims and Christians some of them, meeting, perhaps, for the first time holding each other in a brotherly embrace. 'Id-Mubarak' introduced with 'Happy Christmas'.

The celebration was permeated with family atmosphere with children and ladies both Muslim and Christian getting fully involved in the programme. Dr. M. Anwar explained the significance of Baqar-id while Dr. Prasanna gave the Christmas message. The occasion found a rich expression in the poetry composed and recited by Dr. Bhajjan, Director of the Institute, Mr. Zainul-Abideen and Mr. H. Afreed. The function came to a close with the family meal, all partaking from the same table as brothers and sisters. The parting in the night was a joyful one with a sense of accomplishment: a new awareness in being one. The Muslim papers in the city carried a very favourable report.

SAM V. BHAJJAN

Christian Confessions of Jesus of Nazareth

A joint conference of the *Indian Christian Theological Association* (ICTA) and the *Society for Biblical Studies* (SBS) was held at the Andhra Christian Theological College, Hyderabad, from 28th December 1974 to 2nd January, 1975. The main theme for the conference was Christology in India and it was worded as *Christian Confessions of Jesus of Nazareth*. The Conference was jointly chaired by the Chairman of the ICTA, Dr. J. R. Chandran and the Chairman of the SBS, Rev. Fr. J. Panakal. The Secretaries of the two associations were Rev. Fr. J. Panakal and Rev. A. C. M. Hargreaves were the Conference Secretaries. The Conference was well attended. Out of 79 participants 29 were Roman Catholics, 45 Protestants and 5 Orthodox and Mar Thoma. 11 Roman Catholic theological seminaries and 11 Protestant theological Colleges and 2 Orthodox Mar Thoma Colleges were represented.

At the opening session Rev. Fr. L. Legrand of St. Peter's Seminary, Bangalore, read a paper surveying the recent New Testament Studies and their significance for Christology, emphasising particularly the new quest for the historical Jesus. In the following days the Christological confession of the Church was considered under four sub-themes, namely *Jesus Christ: Freedom fighter or Prince of Peace*; *Jesus: Cosmic Christ or Son of History*; *Jesus: the Christ of Mystical Union or the Prophetic Christ*; *Jesus: Christ of the Atonement or the New Man*. Some had serious reservations and criticisms about the wording of the sub-themes on the ground that they are superficial, over-simplificative and misleading. It was, however, clarified that they were not intended for simple choice of one title in each pair. They were meant to raise the Christological issue in a provocative manner and to lead a discussion on the deeper meaning of the confession of Jesus in continuity with the Apostolic faith.

Discussions on each theme were based on several scholarly papers by theologians and Biblical scholars, Roman Catholic and Protestant. Many important and interesting issues were raised. Was the Jesus of history concerned with change of socio-political structures or only with personal conversion? What is the relation between the inner spiritual freedom which we have in Christ and the external structures which determine our physical and social life? How do we discern the presence of Christ and his work in the events and movements in contemporary history? What is the relation between the Jesus of Nazareth and the Cosmic Christ? Is it possible to identify Cosmic Christ with the Isvara of Hindu religious tradition? How far does the concept of the cosmic Christ provide a basis for co-operation with men of other faiths?

How do we understand the mystical traditions? Is

mysticism in any way related to the apparent silence of God in the face of injustice, corruption and exploitation and unmerited suffering of the innocent? What is the relation between the silence of God and human silence or action? What is the relation between Jesus' role as the New Man and the atoning work of Christ? What is the significance of the concept of the New Man for the contemporary Development concerns and the Liberation struggles?

These are just a few of many similar questions raised and discussed. It was clear that more systematic study was needed. It was also pointed out that the studies undertaken by the Biblical scholars and the theologians should bear in mind the pastoral evangelistic and social dimensions of the Church's Mission in India. The participants were quite enthusiastic about the results of the first joint conference of the SBS and ICTA and recommended that such conferences should be held at regular intervals. The conference also bore evidence of the growing maturity of relations between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. Many spoke of the cordiality of spirit which prevailed at the Conference and also of the fact that differences of opinion and views cut across the confessional or denominational differences. The common worship arrangements contributed much to the positive impressions made by the conference. The fact that oneness at the Lord's table is not yet a possibility was recognised at two eucharistic services, one celebrated by the Roman Catholics at which the others were present without participation of the elements and the other celebrated by the Protestants when the Catholics could not participate. The other worship services were non-eucharistic and were ecumenical in leadership and content so that all could join without reservations.

At the separate business sessions held by the two bodies the following officer-bearers were elected:

The ICTA: *Chairman*: Dr. J. R. Chandran
Vice-Chairman: Dr. Samuel V. Bhajjan
Secretary/Treasurer: Rev. Fr. J. Panakal

Additional members of the Advisory Committee:

Rev. Fr. J. Neuner, Rev. Fr. T. Mampra
and Rev. A. P. Athyal.

SBS: *Chairman*: Dr. Victor Premasagar
Vice-Chairman: Rev. Fr. Longinus Nazareth
Secretary: Rev. Fr. Vellanickal
Treasurer: Rev. Dr. K. V. Mathew.

DR. J. R. CHANDRAN

CSI Industrial Promotion and Training Board

The Industrial Promotion and Training Board of the Church of South India had organised a symposium in Katpadi on technical education and training with the kind financial help of Christian Aid, U.K.

The dates of the symposium were from 26th November to 30th November 1974 and the Theme was,

'Church in the field of Technical Training and Vocational Education'.

All the Bishops in CSI, General Secretary, and Treasurer of the Synod participated in the symposium. One delegate from each diocese and the heads of Technical Institutions in the CSI, participated in the symposium. Among the altogether 70 participants were

Mr. Murray Culshaw, who gave the keynote address
Dr. Sen Gupta of the Central Agency, Bonn

Dr. C. Besant Raj from the Administrative Staff College, Hyderabad.

Mr. Vasagam, IAS, Director of Employment and Training, Government of Tamil Nadu, and

Mr. Sam Isaac, Deputy Director, Small Scale Industries, Madras.

The inaugural session was held at 11 a.m. on 26-11-'74 under the Chairmanship of the Moderator the Most Rev. N. D. A. Samuel. The General Secretary Mrs. D. L. Gopal Ratnam, gave the background history of the symposium. The Moderator in his inaugural address, stressed the need for this ministry as a priority during the next decade. The keynote address presented by Mr. Culshaw had thrown open a new challenge for training the rural youth in various skills to rehabilitate them in their own environment. The conventional type of technical education was questioned.

Dr. Besant Raj impressed upon the members the enormous resources in men and material the churches had to promote cottage and small scale industries and to improve the economic status of the Christians in particular and the wider community in general.

Mr. Sam and Mr. Vasagam, explained the various opportunities available for job seekers in the Government and they stressed that the Church should avail them without any further delay.

The delegates were divided into four groups for discussion of the keynote address and other challenges thrown open by various speakers. The groups presented

their findings and the symposium arrived at the following consensus:

(a) To initiate training programmes primarily for the Rural under-privileged youth. We accept that the programmes should be flexible, bearing in mind the need to continually look for the cheapest way to train the maximum number of youth so that the pattern established are suitable for duplication on a much wider scale.

(b) While accepting that our priority is to search out for new directions, we acknowledge our responsibilities to the existing institutional network and affirm that the board must provide services to nurture, where necessary, restructure them.

(c) We call on the board to establish an endowment of Rs. 1,00,000 inviting each Diocese to raise a minimum of ten thousand and strongly recommend that no request be made to overseas donor agencies or general administration funds, until a minimum of Rs. 2 lakhs has been raised. We envisage this as being a symbolic expression of the well-to-do members of the church's concern for those who live under more distressed circumstances.

(i) The training programmes will emphasise skills leading to self-employment and to improving the rural communities especially covering the basic human needs of food, clothing, shelter and health. We accept that the Board should do its best to provide services, which will help to achieve success in the new directions.

(ii) The important first step will be to help the dioceses find and select men and women who will be released and supported by the Diocese to help to promote these new programmes. We acknowledge that before starting work the selected individuals should receive suitable orientation training and that they will be supported by the necessary administrative structure.

P. D. PRASADA RAO

Hon. Convenor

Industrial Promotion & Training Board

BIBLE THIRUKKURAL RESEARCH

The Bible Thirukkural Research is gathering momentum. The Archbishop Dr. R. Arulappa of Madras-Mylapore has written three new books. The English booklet *Thirukkural a Christian Book?* has placed the salient features of this Research before everyone who likes to know something about what it all is. Eminent scholars have met in seminars and conferences a few times over these books but not one book has come out against the ten published so far in Tamil. The church could very profitably supplement her understanding of the Bible by study of this 'Classic'. Thirukkural is now found (if not proved) to be a first century interpretation of the gospels. For further information please contact

THE REV. V. D. SAHAYAM
8, Ormes Road
Madras-600 010

Concern is Christianity

Concern—is the word that I would choose, if I am asked to sum up in one word—the Fifteenth session of the Madras Diocesan Council that met in Bain's School, Madras, (Jan. 13-16).

A Concern for the CHARISMA was most evident from the beginning to the end. Apprehensions there were, about the conduct of the Council—the President being the youngest ever Bishop in the See of Madras and this being his first Council as Bishop—but very soon even the most apprehensive of members were put at ease. The key to such a transformation lies in the charismatic leadership of the new Bishop (who quotes as his motto 'not by might, nor by merit but by my Holy Spirit saith the Lord'), and the considered counsels of Bishop Henry Lazarus.

Under such leadership, an over-full Agenda was not allowed to dim the awareness that the Council was primarily a gathering of the people of God, to whom the Bible and prayer were the pivotal point of the whole business. The Rev. Dyanchand Carr of the Tamil Nadu Theological College, Arasaradi, led the daily Bible Study.

The fact that the Council was concerned about the things of the Spirit was borne out when the entire gathering decided to go to God with fasting and united prayer, interceding for the countless people in Tamil Nadu who are already facing famine and death on account of an unprecedented drought.

A Concern for Social Action is inseparable from the concern for the Charisma to all who wish to follow the Master's example who not only preached the Gospel but went about doing good. Inspired and challenged by the Presidential Address, the Council 'declared war' on famine in Tamil Nadu and the City churches vowed to raise Rs. 3 lakhs in 3 months towards the Diocesan Famine Relief Fund. And as if to prove that it meant business, the Council saw to the Collection Box kept for

the purpose yield over Rs. 2,000 only in the three days of session, by way of Free Will Offerings.

Looking beyond this immediate and localised social concern, the Council considered both 'The Role of the Church in India today'—led by Dr. J. Piet and the Rev. D. Carr; and the concept that 'Jesus Christ frees and Unites'—led by Mr. S. A. Satyasatchy, in a thought-provoking discussion.

A concern for the Brethren was again evinced when the main subject on the Agenda—'The Scheme for the creation of a new Diocese' (relating to the proposed bifurcation of Madras Dioceses into two dioceses) was taken up for discussion and adoption. Here again many heard ominous rumblings and saw fearful portents, as this was a very sensitive subject to many. However, thanks be to God, the outcome was entirely in keeping with the ethics of the Church of God; and both the people of the yet-unborn Diocese and those who shall remain in the Diocese now in travail fulfilled the Scripture, 'Let there be no strife between you and me and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen for we are kinsmen. Is not the whole land before you?'. A resolve to keep the brotherhood in Christ unbroken in the event of the division of the Diocese was evident in all.

A Concern for Mission also characterized the Council, which never lost sight of the responsibility that is vested in the Church as the vehicle of God's salvation and healing. The Bishop challenged the Council to think up new ways of Evangelism, new tools to facilitate the communication of the Gospel and above all to a new determination to bridge the gap between a world in deep darkness and despair and the loving and waiting God of all comfort.

—THE REVD. NOEL JASON

Presbyter-in-charge

St. Matthias' Church, Vepery

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1. Post-Graduate Research Diploma.
2. Studies leading to a Doctoral Degree.
3. Post-Doctoral Research.

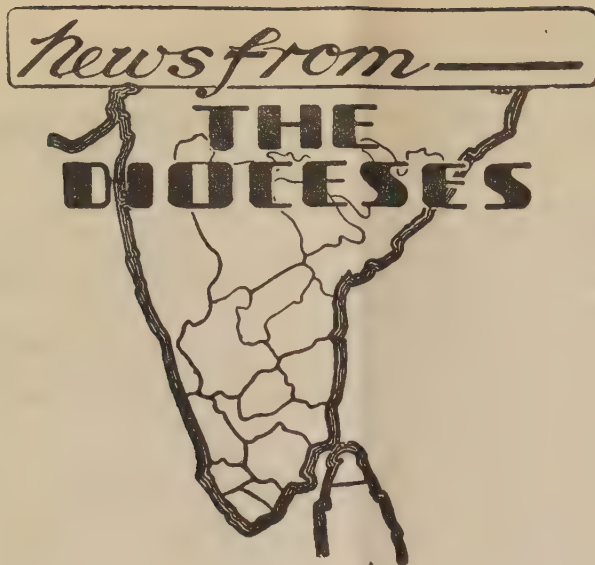
The minimum qualification for admission to Post-Graduate Research Diploma course will be an M.A. Degree of a recognised University or B.D. Degree or its equivalent; for admission to Doctoral Programme, the minimum qualification will be eligibility for admission to the Doctoral Programme of the University in which the degree will be taken. In the case of Post-Doctoral candidates, the Post-Graduate Division should be satisfied with the programme of Research. It is expected that the candidates will show qualities of mature judgement, sound theological perception and a capacity for a careful independent research.

The subject chosen for Research should be related to an aspect of the life, thought and mission of the church in the countries included in the Christian Conference of Asia. The candidate is required to present the result of his Research in the form of thesis worthy of publication.

The value of the Scholarship will be Rs. 500 per month for 12 months in the first instance. For Post-Graduate Research Diploma students and Post-Doctoral Research students, the scholarship will be available for only one year. In the case of Doctoral candidates, the Scholarship normally will not be extended for more than 1 year beyond the initial year. The extension of the Scholarship will depend upon the research and the academic performance of the candidate being satisfactory. In addition to this scholarship amount, free tuition and accommodation will be provided. The candidate is expected to be in residence at the College during the period he receives the Scholarship. The Post-Doctoral candidates may be invited by the College to give lectures in the area of his research.

This programme will commence from June, 1975.

THE REV. J. R. CHANDRAN



TIRUNELVELI DIOCESE

On the invitation of the Rt. Rev. John G. Savarimuthu, Bishop of West Malaysia, and through the kind permission of the Bishop in Tirunelveli, I flew from Madras to Kuala Lumpur on the 24th July, 1974.

The next day, I participated in the Preparatory Service arranged for the members of the Synod which was in session from that day in Malacca. I was requested to address each meeting daily till the session was over. I spoke on the subject of 'Law of Love' based on the facts of St. Paul's Epistle to Romans. The Spirit of God worked in the meetings, in such a way that some of the people who were not in good terms with each other reconciled themselves. All glory and honour be unto Him. The members of the Synod donated a sum of 500 Malayan dollars to the Children's Home at Christianagaram.

At times, the Christian congregations observe 'love feast'. Those who participate in these feasts bring their own food and share in common. This custom is to be appreciated, and there is every possibility of the growth of divine love. In Singapore, I had the opportunity to preach in the Anglican, Methodist and Lutheran churches. I returned to India on the 14th November, 1974.

REV. M. S. JESUDASON

MEDAK

Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Medak Cathedral held from 13th to 15th January, 1975

Medak Cathedral which was built by the vision, zeal, and sacrifice of Rev. W. Posnett is known for its magnificence and majesty. The members of the Medak diocese and other Christians celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Cathedral with unspeakable joy and enthusiasm in the cathedral compound from 13th to 15th January 1975.

Bishop P. Solomon of Dornakal Diocese conducted the inaugural service at 2.30 p.m. on the 13th January. On

the same day 'Kavisammelan' was held in the evening at 6.30 p.m. conducted by the Rev. P. Dass B. Bishop Luther Abraham of Medak diocese conducted worship service at 9 a.m. on the 14th in the Cathedral. The Moderator the Most Rev. Ananda Rao Sam preached at the service and also presided over the pu meeting at 3.30 p.m. Bishop Elia Peter conveyed fraternal greetings on behalf of the Methodist Church. The two honoured guests were the Hon. Minister Education, Sri M. V. Krishna Rao and Hon. Minister Tourism, Dr. C. H. Devananda Rao. The speakers paid a rich tribute to the life and service of the Rev. W. Posnett. The Rev. G. Shaw brought greetings from Methodist Missionary Society.

P. D. PRASADA RAO

KARNATAKA SOUTHERN DIOCESE

The amended Karnataka Land Reforms Act has come into force with effect from 1-4-1974 and the result has been that all agricultural lands in possession of tenants stand vested in the Government. We welcome these measures as this agrarian reform would be promoting social justice to the backward class of farmers giving ownership to the actual tillers. But then the diocese will be losing 791 acres of agricultural land with it substantial source of income increasing the deficit of the budget still further. But God will continue to guide and strengthen us to work for His glory and the good of His people. He may show us pastures open to us new avenues.

During the year we had 40 Presbyters, 22 Deacons, 11 Lay Preachers and 12 other workers, a total of 85 workers on our rolls. There are still some vacancies but they are small stations and it will not be possible to put full-time workers till 1976, when we expect the trained candidates from the Karnataka Theological College, Balmatta, Mangalore. There is, however, a great necessity to strengthen the band of evangelical workers headed by Rev. S. A. Salins, which is now operating in Coorg district. We want to extend its operation to other undeveloped areas by adding on two more workers. We trust God will help us in providing more not only to maintain the two workers but also to provide with a vehicle for this work.

During the year, two boarding homes were started, one at Hadya and the other at Tarikere. A third one at Anandapur has been sanctioned. There are also proposals for starting boarding homes at Chikmagalur, Kasaragod and Crèche centres at Korankrapady, Malpe, Baikampady, and Kadalur. We hope the projects for economic development finalised for Talavady and Chamarajanagar and Hadya will be sanctioned soon for implementation in 1975.

The three major hospitals, the 2 high schools, the primary schools, the 12 boarding homes, the leprosy unit and the home for the aged people continue to play an important part in the life of the community. Much more is expected from these institutions. They should more and more portray the life and ideals of Jesus Christ.

THE RT. REV. S. R. FURTADO

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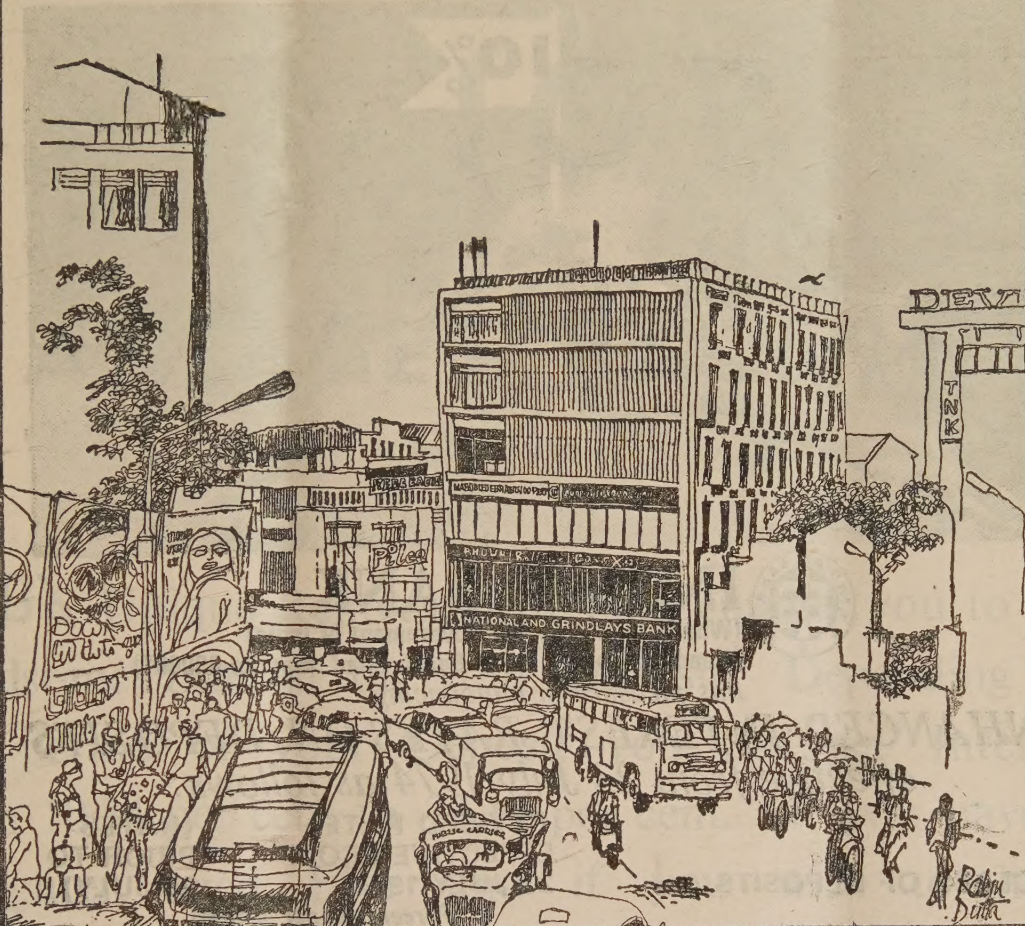
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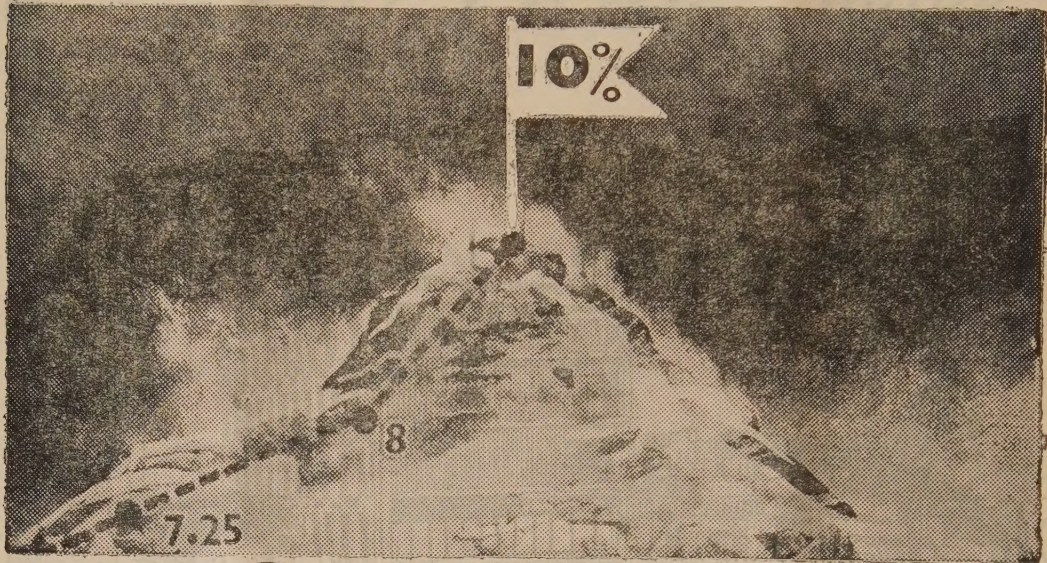
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